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AWARDS

Batman v. Superman: Who wins at the box office?

By Ryan Faughnder

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Powered by a surge in global ticket sales, "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice" enjoyed a huge opening weekend, setting the stage for a big series of DC Comics movies yet to come from Warner Bros.

The \$250-million movie grossed \$420 million in global box-office receipts, with about \$166 million from the U.S. and Canada alone.

[Internationally](#), the picture scored \$254 million, led by China, the biggest ever global debut for a superhero movie.

That's a good sign for Warner Bros., [which is counting on](#) the Zack Snyder-directed movie to establish the foundation for a broader, shared DC Comics universe to compete with Disney's Marvel Studios.

Investors were pleased with the results, sending shares of the studio's parent company Time Warner Inc. up 4% in midday trading on Wall Street.

The \$166-million domestic opening was down from earlier estimates, but was still enough for the biggest domestic March debut of all time, topping the \$152-million kick-off for "The Hunger Games" in 2012. It was also the largest DC movie opening, beating "The Dark Knight Rises" from 2012.

Bringing two of the world's most popular superheros together on screen for an epic battle resulted in impressive ticket sales, but the characters have very different box-office track records on their own.

Batman

Bruce Wayne and his caped crusader have the clear edge. Adjusting for today's dollars, the eight Batman movies starting with Tim Burton's 1989 adaptation have grossed \$4.8 billion worldwide.

Figures are for global ticket sales and are inflation adjusted. In millions.

Batman - 1989



\$787

Batman Returns - 1992

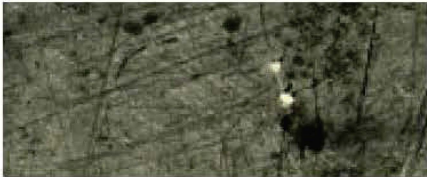


\$451

Batman: Mask of the Phantasm - 1993

\$9

Batman Forever - 1995



\$524

Batman and Robin - 1997



\$352

Batman Begins - 2005



\$454

The Dark Knight - 2008



\$1,106

The Dark Knight Rises - 2012



\$1,120

Superman

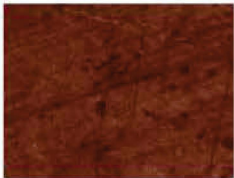
Superman movies have taken in about \$2.7 billion worldwide, led by the \$1.1 billion from the 1978 film "Superman." Clark Kent's grosses were hampered by the 1987 flop "Superman IV: The Quest for Peace." Superman didn't return to the big screen for almost two decades.

Superman - 1978



\$1,092

Superman II - 1981



\$282

Superman III - 1983



\$143

Superman IV: The Quest for Peace - 1987



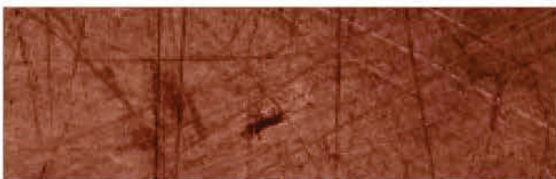
\$33

Superman Returns - 2006



\$460

Man of Steel - 2013



\$680

Meanwhile, Batman got a massive modern boost from Christopher Nolan's "Dark Knight" trilogy, a well-received reboot that followed Joel Schumacher's less serious versions of the hero. "The Dark Knight Rises" was the highest grossing Batman movie, tallying \$1.12 billion.

It's yet to be seen how well the latest incarnations of Batman and Superman will fare. Critics pummeled "Batman v Superman," tagging it with a mere 29% positive rating on Rotten Tomatoes. Audiences were somewhat kinder, giving it an average grade of "B" according to the exit polling firm CinemaScore.

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Note: Figures are for global ticket sales and are inflation adjusted. In millions.

Sources: Box Office Mojo, Bureau of Labor Statistics inflation calculator

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Ryan Faughnder is a senior editor with the Los Angeles Times' Company Town team, which covers the business of entertainment. He also hosts the entertainment industry newsletter The Wide Shot. A San Diego native, he earned a master's degree in journalism from USC and a bachelor's in English from UC Santa Barbara. Before joining The Times in 2013, he wrote for the Los Angeles Business Journal and Bloomberg News.